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Viewing cable 09STATE18632, A/S SHANNON'S MEETING WITH ECUADORIAN AMBASSADOR

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09STATE18632**.

| Reference ID | Created | Released | Classification | Origin |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 09STATE18632 | 2009-02-27 18:47 | 2011-08-30 01:44 | CONFIDENTIAL | Secretary of State |

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/07/1/1355/cable-194460.html>

O R 271847Z FEB 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018632

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EC](#)
SUBJECT: A/S SHANNON'S MEETING WITH ECUADORIAN AMBASSADOR
TO DISCUSS PRESIDENT CORREA'S CALL TO EXPEL DHS ATTACHE

REF: QUITO 100

Classified By: A/S ...

id: 194460
date: 2/27/2009 18:47
refid: 09STATE18632
origin: Secretary of State
classification: CONFIDENTIAL
destination: 09QUITO100
header:
O R 271847Z FEB 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018632

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2019

TAGS: PREL SNAR EC

SUBJECT: A/S SHANNON'S MEETING WITH ECUADORIAN AMBASSADOR
TO DISCUSS PRESIDENT CORREA'S CALL TO EXPEL DHS ATTACHE

REF: QUITO 100

Classified By: A/S SHANNON, REASONS 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) A/S Shannon met Ecuadorian Ambassador Luis Gallegos for a discussion of President Correa's February 7 call to expel DHS Attache Armando Astorga from Embassy Quito. Gallegos was focused on finding a diplomatic solution to the matter. He attempted to explain Correa's sharp response to a letter Astorga sent to the head of the Ecuadorian National Police as based partially on GOE misunderstanding of the vetting process. He suggested that the USG endeavor to explain vetting more fully to the GOE--and to highlight that this is a common practice used in many countries. A/S Shannon emphasized that the USG continues to seek cooperation with the GOE based on common interests. However, he stressed that the GOE's recent "diplomacy by megaphone" was unhelpful. Ambassador Gallegos urged high level engagement by the Obama administration and pushed hard for A/S Shannon to visit Ecuador as soon as possible. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Joined by his DCM and Political Counselor, Ambassador Gallegos met with A/S Shannon on February 7 to discuss recent acerbic comments by President Correa in response to a DHS letter that withdrew U.S. support for a DHS ICE vetted anti-smuggling unit (reftel). WHA/AND Officer Director and Desk Officer also participated. A/S Shannon opened the meeting by noting the profound common interests that Ecuador and the United States share, including the fight against drugs and terrorism. He stated that we need to reflect upon the bilateral relationship, examine our approaches, and work to construct a base for durable cooperation.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Gallegos responded by asserting that many GOE officials do not understand the vetting process. He noted that the Spanish translation of the word "vet" into a word that means "veto" in Spanish created problems. According to Gallegos, vetting per se (the establishment of the bona fides of individuals working in law enforcement networks) is not objectionable. He suggested that the vetting procedures which are currently conducted based on verbal agreements between the USG and the GOE should be codified into written procedures that would be clear to all parties. A/S Shannon responded that we need to cooperate on vital law enforcement issues and agreed that "vetting is not a veto." He pointed out the U.S. officials working in similar units are vetted as well, including background checks and polygraph tests. He added that throughout the vetting process if the USG finds prejudicial information, we share it with the GOE--which then makes final decisions.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Gallegos suggested the USG endeavor to explain in detail to GOE officials the "how and why of the vetting process," emphasizing in particular that this is an international practice that occurs in other countries. He also highlighted Coordinating Minister for Internal and External Security Carvajal's public declaration on February 9 that emphasized GOE hopes to find a way forward and resolve the issue.

¶5. (C) A/S Shannon observed that we are seeking a solution. However, he pointed out that this "diplomacy by megaphone" was not helpful, and it was particularly surprising that the GOE would take such a harsh public tone at the start of the

Obama administration. A/S Shannon stressed that President Correa's suggestion that funding for the vetted unit be donated for the rehabilitation of those who have suffered torture at the U.S. base in Guantanamo, Cuba, was gratuitous and mean-spirited. Nonetheless, A/S Shannon said that both governments should focus on common interests and on what can be done to save the good work of the vetted units in Ecuador. Ambassador Gallegos agreed with these observations, and commented that this issue presented an opportunity to advance bilateral communication and understanding. He urged A/S Shannon to visit Ecuador as soon as possible to take advantage of this opportunity.

CLINTON

=====CABLE ENDS=====